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(U) CHINA: RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN
ARMS CONTROL POLICIES^{1/}

(C) Summary

China has shown an increased interest in several aspects of arms control during the past year. Both Premier Zhao Ziyang and Foreign Minister Wu Xueqian have issued broad-ranging proposals for the limitation and destruction of nuclear, space, chemical, and conventional weapons. [to the

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Events of the past year, most notably the US-Soviet summit in November, have made China more conscious of the political ramifications of arms control.

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1/ (U) This paper deals with events since the publication of INR Report 1089-AR, "China's Growing Interest in Arms Control Measures," CONFIDENTIAL, May 24, 1985.

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Report 1251-AR
March 25, 1986

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(C) Background

China increasingly has sought a more direct role for itself in arms control forums and has made clear that it hopes to gain a greater voice in the formulation of arms control agreements. It has publicized an increasingly comprehensive program of arms control measures that calls for greater participation of other countries and for the negotiation and conclusion of arms control agreements in multilateral forums.

This program is part of China's effort to break the "hegemony" of the superpowers.
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(C) New Proposals at the UNGA

Chinese leaders in recent months have twice used public forums to present increasingly comprehensive arms control programs. In his speech at the UN General Assembly last September, Foreign Minister Wu introduced proposals that appear intended to provide the basis for Chinese activities in arms control forums for some time to come. Wu urged that:

--The nuclear powers should pledge not to use nuclear weapons first and not to use or threaten to use these weapons against nonnuclear states. Moreover, a convention banning the use of nuclear weapons should be concluded.

--NATO and the Warsaw Pact should conclude an agreement on drastic reduction of their conventional weapons.

--The US and the USSR should stop all military activity in outer space. All countries should refrain from "developing, testing, or deploying outer space weaponry," and an international agreement should be reached as soon as possible on the "complete prohibition and destruction of outer space weaponry."

--The Geneva-based Conference on Disarmament (CD) should conclude a convention on the prohibition and destruction of chemical weapons. Pending this, all states should pledge not to use chemical weapons and should stop all development, transfer, and deployment of these weapons.

On March 21, 1986, Premier Zhao elaborated on these proposals in a speech to a "peace" forum in Beijing. Zhao's most notable additions to Wu's proposals were to call for:

--"the simultaneous and balanced" reduction and destruction of INF in Europe and Asia;

--arms control agreements that contain "effective measures of verification"; and

--the participation of "all countries" in disarmament discussions, which should not be "monopolized by a few big powers."

(C) Opposition to Outer Space Weapons

China has repeatedly and explicitly stated its opposition to all "outer space weaponry," including President Reagan's strategic defense initiative.

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In October 1985, the PRC introduced in the UNGA's First Committee a resolution opposing all forms of space-based weapons, which it eventually withdrew as China supported the resolution offered by the neutral and nonaligned nations. (In 1984 China tabled but then withdrew a similar resolution.) The resolution again asked the CD to consider the question of preventing an arms race in outer space and to conclude an agreement or agreements "on the prohibition and destruction of all outer space weapon systems."

The resolution also called on the US and the USSR to "refrain from developing, testing, and deploying outer space weapons" and

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to "conduct serious bilateral negotiations" leading to the banning of outer space weapons. Finally, the resolution called on the UNGA to include this issue in its provisional agenda for the next session. China has continued to press its opposition to space-based weapons in international forums, most recently in a speech on February 13 by its chief delegate to the CD. In the speech the Chinese also proposed that the CD establish an ad hoc committee "to conduct substantive negotiations" on the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

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Finally, China has publicly stated its concern that work on defensive systems will give the US and the USSR a capability to deploy offensive systems in space that would give them an enormous strategic advantage over all other countries.

(S/EXDIS) Views on INF

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(C) Pressing for Multilateral Negotiations

China has continued to press its call for a wider role in arms control negotiations for both the CD and the UNGA First Committee, claiming that negotiations in these forums should complement bilateral US-Soviet talks on nuclear and space-related issues. Most recently, in his February 13 speech, the Chinese CD delegate insisted that bilateral and multilateral talks complement one another and that "it is high time" for the CD "to play its due role" in negotiating arms control agreements.

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(S/NF) Other Issues: Nuclear and Chemical Talks

Zhao's declaration in his March 21 speech that China will conduct no more atmospheric nuclear tests appears

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China continues to condemn the nonproliferation treaty as "discriminatory" but insists that it does not help other countries develop nuclear weapons. While maintaining its opposition to the partial test ban agreement, China announced at the CD in February that it would participate in an ad hoc committee on a nuclear test ban if such a group were established by the CD. As evidence of its growing willingness to play a role in such matters, the PRC participated last year in an ad hoc committee at the CD on seismic events relating to nuclear test ban verification measures.

Finally, China continues to press for a ban on chemical weapons and has taken a special interest in these talks in recent years. In July 1985 China introduced at the CD a working paper on the destruction of chemical weapons, but has yet to follow up with further proposals. The inclusion of a call for a ban on chemical weapons in the speeches of both Zhao and Wu, however, underscores the continuing importance China attributes to the prohibition and destruction of such weapons.